

TO NEWSMEN AND SELLERS.

In the publication of the *Next Number* a material alteration will take place.—The number of Registers now printed and published makes it impossible to transact the whole of the business of publication at one and the same place. Therefore, the matter is thus arranged: The **STAMPED REGISTER** will continue to be published at No. 192, Strand, London. The **CHEAP REGISTER** will be published at No. 8, Catherine Street, Strand, London. But, the public will please to observe, that it will *not* be sold retail in Catherine Street. It will be retailed at No. 192, Strand, as usual; and will be sold wholesale, in Catherine Street, to Newsmen, Booksellers, and any others who sell again. Therefore, all persons in the Country, who may wish to be supplied with the *Cheap Register*, will please to address themselves to Wm. COBBETT, JUNIOR, No. 8, Catherine Street, Strand, London.—There has been much irregularity in our correspondence with gentlemen in the Country; but, this has arisen from the press of business, which has not left us time to do what we wished. We shall now have more time, and be more punctual.—The wholesale price is 12s. 6d. a hundred to all who retail in or near London; and, it is the same for the Country, except to such persons as take a thousand or more every week; and in that case, the price is 11s. a hundred.—A very good way is to send for 1,000 a week, and then employ others to carry them about the Country at 12s. 6d. or 13s. a hundred.—Any poor man, in any part of the kingdom, who can be *well recommended*, may have any quantity sent to him, and he can pay us *week under week*.—CORRUPTION is busy at work publishing things with *my name* to them! How desperate must her case be? But the reader will observe, that I write nothing but *The Weekly Political Register*, and publish wholesale only at No. 8, Catherine Street, Strand.—If this be not seen at the end, the publication having my name is an IMPOSTURE.—All Letters must be *post-paid*.

A
CALL
UPON

THE CLERGY

To come forward and assist in the putting an end to Bribery, Corruption, Perjury, and all sorts of infamies; and to deny, if they can, the persecutions and the cruelties of the House of Bourbon and the horrors of the Inquisition, both of which have now been restored.

—
“The congregation of hypocrites shall
“be desolate, and fire shall consume
“the tabernacles of *Bribery*.”

JOB. Chap. 15, v. 34.

—
London, Dec. 25, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

The text, which I have here taken is the very text, which, nearly *eleven years ago*, I posted up in the borough of HONITON in Devonshire, with the hope of inducing some part, at least, of its inhabitants to give their votes without receiving *payment* for them, which is, as you well know, not only bribery, but bribery of that sort, the being concerned in which is made, in Scripture, the ground of exposing the guilty parties to have their habitations consumed by fire. There is no doubt, that this denunciation is to be understood figuratively; that it was not meant that the bribers or the bribed would have their habitations actually burnt; but there can be as little doubt, that it was meant to declare in the strongest terms, that bribery was to be looked upon as a most heinous offence, and that it would inevitably be followed by the se-

verest of all punishments. 'Your habitations shall be consumed; you and your very dwellings shall be swept from the face of the earth, on account of this horrid crime.' This appears to have been the clear meaning of the text, and a denunciation more awful is not, as far as I recollect, contained in the whole of the Scriptures.

Now, seeing that I have, in this same work of mine, and under this same title, laboured incessantly for the last *eleven years of my life*, with a view to root out the cause of Bribery, Corruption and Perjury, it is not without feelings strongly tinged with indignation that I have learnt, that the most busy and most loud of the calumniators of me and my work, have been found and are still to be found in *your Order*. I will not, however, be so unjust as these men, who make a point of confounding me with known traitors and murderers; I will not level against your whole body that censure, which, as I would fain hope, is merited but by comparatively *a few* of the Clergy of the Church of England, who, as an Order of Men, can, I trust, never be so detestably base as to co-operate with the hirelings of Corruption's Press in the work of impeding the progress of undeniable truths, and in that of propagating notorious falsehoods.

But, speaking with this large and liberal exception, have I not reason to complain of the enmity which you discover towards the cause of *Parliamentary Reform* generally, and particularly towards the exertions which I and many other individuals are now making in that cause; And further, have I not reason to complain, that now, when you *must* see the absolute necessity of Reform in order to secure the chance of a restoration of national happiness, you do not, from any of your more than thousand pulpits, utter a single word in favour of

that measure, the justice of which no man, whose character is not already as black as soot, will attempt to deny?

If, indeed, the Reformers in general, and I in particular, had made the undermining of Religion or the taking away of the Temporal Property of the Church, a part of the change we contemplate and recommend, there might have been some ground for your hostility towards us and our plans. But, while the Reformers in general have been wholly silent upon these matters, I have most strenuously recommended the abstaining from all attempts to mix up questions of religion with the question of Reform. I am for coming to no previous determination as to the Temporalities of the Church; but, to leave that matter to be settled (if it be necessary to meddle with it at all) by a parliament, chosen fairly by the people at large. There *are persons*, who have ascribed a large part of the present sufferings of the nation to the existence of *tythes*; and who, of course, have directed, as far as they have been able, *the hatred of the people against you*. They have, in fact, told the people, that your tythes are *a tax*; that they are a *heavy burden upon the farmer and the poor*; that they are *oppressive*; and, in short, that they are one of the *great causes* of the present miseries of the people. But, *who are these persons?* Not the Reformers; no, but those very men whom you are labouring to uphold against the Reformers! And, what is more, you must see, that these men have now in contemplation a measure, which, if adopted, will inevitably, in a few years, produce the total annihilation of the whole of your Temporal means! On the other hand, so far from joining in this deceptive outcry against you; so far from putting the tythes upon the level of the *taxes*, I have taken no inconsiderable pains to show the fallacy of such a notion. I have re-

minded my readers, that it would be difficult to show, how *the mass of the people* can suffer because the rent of the landlord is divided with the parson; I have reminded them, that, if tythes were abolished to-morrow, they would only be added to the farmer's rent, and go to add to the already immense estates of the landlord, without doing any good to the people at large; I have reminded them, that tythes have existed for *seven hundred years*, and that England has been very happy during that time, but *Paper-Money, National Debts, Standing Armies, Enormous Sinecures, Pensions and Grants to East-India Companies, French Emigrants, &c.* are quite NEW THINGS, and, that to these, and not to our ancient establishments, are our miseries to be ascribed. Who but me, amongst all the Laymen in England, has ever treated your Order with this fairness and liberality? Who, with any degree of talent at his command, has ever put your case upon its true ground? And yet, whom have you ever pursued with so much foulness and illiberality?

However, with regard to your Temporalities you must now be left to take your chance. If prejudices, though they may be unfounded, exist against your possessions, I look upon myself as absolved from the duty of interference, seeing that those possessions are made use of by you to impede the progress of political knowledge, and that your pulpits resound with the cry of "*sedition*" against truths which cannot be denied and arguments which cannot be answered. You have, for years past, been cheering on the gentry and yeomanry in the pursuit and for the destruction of the Reformers; and, it will, therefore, not be a subject of very deep regret, if, at last, you should, like ACTEON, be devoured by your own hounds.

It is possible, that some of you may doubt whether a Parliamentary Reform

would produce *all* the good which we contemplate; but, it is quite impossible that you should not be convinced, that it would put an end to the greatest mass of wickedness that ever existed in any nation upon earth. You know as well as I do that the land is filled with crimes in consequence of the present mode of election. You know that drunkenness, fraud, calumny, bribery, corruption, false-swearing, and, in short, every species of infamy, are produced by this cause, and that, too, in degree and quantity wholly unparalleled in the history of the world. When I was at HONITON, in 1806, many of the wretched voters told me, in the hearing of witnesses now alive, that they knew how wicked it was to do what they did, but, that they wanted the money to pay their rents, and that they should be starved if they did otherwise. Some abused me very foully, and said, that, in advising them to vote uninfluenced by money, I was endeavouring to rob them of their *blessing*! For this was the term they gave to the money which they were to receive. But, indeed, the bribery and corruption, the frauds and false-swearings are too notorious to need particular instances to establish their existence.—The records of parliament, the proceedings of election committees, contain a greater mass of proofs of fraudulent villainy, than, as I verily believe, is to be found in the records of all the criminal courts of all the other nations in the world. And, if to this be added the frauds and the perjuries, growing out of the Custom and Excise Laws, which, for the far greater part, have grown out of Paper Money, National Debts, and Standing Armies, the picture is too huge and too horrid to be endured by any one not lost to every sense of morality and honour.

Now, if this be not a true and fair statement of the case, why have none of

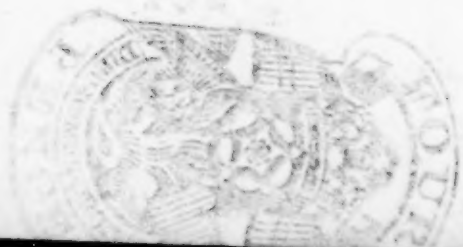
you ventured to contradict and disprove it? There are more than *fifteen thousand* of you, who have *livings*, or *benefices* of one sort or another, and, there are more than twenty thousand of you in Orders. Out of this number can no man be found, with all your College acquirements, to put a cool and fair *answer* upon paper? For forty years has that venerable and most able and virtuous Reformer, Major Cartwright, challenged you to the discussion; and never has he been answered but by revilings. Not that you dislike to meddle with politics; for, of what else have your printed sermons consisted for the last twenty-five years? Amongst the *pamphlet* writers in favour of the wars against the French nation, who figured next after the pensioned Burke? Who but the Ministers of the Church of England? Mr. HERBERT MARSH, who is now become a Bishop, wrote a pamphlet to prove the *justice* and *necessity* of the war; and, this gentleman had a *pension*, too, of more than five hundred pounds a year. Whether he has it *now* is more than I can say; but, he had it in 1808. He published his pamphlet in 1799, or in 1800; and, the pension was given him in the month of May, 1804. I mention this, not only as a well-recorded instance of Clergymen *meddling with politics*; but also, as a proof, that such meddling has not been *displeasing to the Government*. The late Rev. JOHN BRAND wrote a political pamphlet in favour of Pitt and the war, and he had the great living of St. GEORGE, in the Borough of Southwark, given to him very soon afterwards by the then Lord Chancellor Loughborough.—Messrs. NARES and BELOE were long, and, perhaps, still are, the chief conductors of that political engine, called the BRITISH CRITIC. They have both good rich livings, if not two each. Besides, Mr. NARES, who has the living of Reading, is an Archdeacon, and Mr.

BELOE was librarian of the British Museum; the manner of his ceasing to be which, may, when I have more time, be fully recorded.

The object, in giving these instances, is, not to throw blame on these gentlemen for writing on politics. I could say, that some of them have written very badly, and, I am convinced, that, whatever may have been their intentions, they have, in the same degree as they have produced effect, *done mischief*. But, this is not the point at which I am aiming. The object is to shew, that you have not been backward to meddle with politics; and, indeed, it is notorious, that, at public meetings, held for the purpose of promoting the continuation of the late wars, you have seldom failed to take a prominent part, and that, upon one particular occasion, the Clergy of the Diocese of Salisbury, just after the death of PERCEVAL, stood *alone* in urging the Prince Regent to push on the war with *vigour*.

Your not *answering* us, therefore, cannot be ascribed to your dislike to enter into political discussions. No: it arises from your consciousness of the goodness of our cause, and the consequent badness of that of our opponents. You do not answer, because you cannot answer. You cannot openly say, that it would be an *evil* to get rid of bribery, corruption, perjury and subornation of perjury; and yet this you must say, or no answer can you give. There are no shifts and shuffles to be made *avail* with *you*. Others may say, that a Reform of the Parliament would not do good in certain other ways. But you, being Clergymen, must say, at once, that you *approve* of bribery, corruption and perjury, or that a Reform would be a *good thing*. This is the reason why you do not answer our writings, and why you endeavour to misrepresent our characters and our motives.

But, what is most surprising to me, is,



that *you*, above all men in the world, should be able to endure the thought of the existence of such disgraceful crimes, such an audacious violation of decency and moral rectitude, such an open defiance of the religion you profess. When I have beheld the scenes of drunkenness, fraud, perjury, bribery and of beastliness at the contested rotten borough elections, and, indeed, at all elections, where money is expended as the means of obtaining a majority on the poll, I have felt shame at the reflection that those whom I beheld were my countrymen. What, then, ought to have been my reflections, if I had been, as you are, charged with the *care* not only of the *morals*, but of the *souls*, of the people? At your Ordination you vow before God, that *you firmly believe* yourselves to be *called by the Holy Ghost* to take upon you the teaching of the people; and, previous to your induction into any living or curacy, you most solemnly declare that you will do all in your power to lead your flocks in the paths of religion and virtue and holy living, and of your *sincerity* you call upon the Almighty to be your Witness. It is not my wish to accuse you of being wholly unmindful of vows made with such awful solemnity; but, may I not, then, express my surprise, that I have never heard of any one instance, in which you have appeared at any election to put a stop to, or to check, the abominations exhibited at such scenes? But, suppose this remissness to be excusable, which, I think, no one can suppose, ought *you* not to appear foremost in the ranks of those, who would apply a remedy to this monstrous evil, this unparalleled wickedness? Of minor offences you are ready enough to take notice. The breach of the observance of the Lord's Day, which observance is, as you know, enjoined merely by *human laws*, you are apt enough to notice. You

talk stoutly enough against drunkenness, profane swearing, and rioting, all which, though deserving of serious censure, are mere trifles, or, rather, they are nothing at all, when compared to those deliberate acts of bribery, corruption and perjury, which are not only base and detestable in themselves, but which strike, with traitorous hand, at the vitals of our country's freedom and happiness. It is curious to observe, with what alacrity you push forward to join in condemning every thing that is aimed against the conduct of persons in power; how ready you are to make the charge of *sedition* against every man who writes or speaks in defence of the people's rights; but, not a word do you say against the violation of those rights or against any acts, however scandalous, of which persons in power have been guilty, as witness your ever-memorable conduct relative to the affair of the Duke of York and Mrs. Clarke. Instead of making your pulpits ring with condemnation of the acts which had been brought to light, though you were condemning such acts in the *people* every day, you stigmatized as *sedition* men, those who had endeavoured to put an end to such acts by the exposing them to the reprobation of the world. As if it was sedition to complain of the vile traffic which was then brought to light! Nay, it is notorious, that more than one of the Clergy of the Church of England were, more or less, involved in the transactions; and, let it never be forgotten, that one Doctor of the Church obtained the honour of preaching before the king and queen through the interest and *at the express recommendation* of Mrs. Clarke! Now, though I do not pretend to believe, that you, as a *body*, *approved* of these things, yet never did I hear of your *disapprobation* of them; and, I well recollect, that, when, at a public Meeting at Winchester, Resolutions strongly condemning

these scandalous transactions, a Clergyman of the Church of England was the *only* man, who had the shamelessness to oppose them. He, too, called the resolutions *seditions*, which is a very convenient word, as it seems to mean any thing that those who use it please; but, the sense which we ought to put on it when used against fact and argument, is, that it means "*true and unanswerable but dangerous to the corrupt.*"

Amongst all the Ministers of my time PERCEVAL was the favourite of the Church. All men in *great power* are favourites: but, there seemed to be a sort of intrinsic merit in PERCEVAL, which entitled him to your peculiar regard and affection. This man, when *Attorney-General*, prosecuted a *Tinman* of Plymouth, for having offered Mr. ADDINGTON, then Minister, a *sum of money* for a place under the government. This appears to have been a very ignorant man, and he had seen so much of bribery, that he, I dare say, thought there was no danger in what he was doing. Perceval, however, made a grand display of the *enormity* of the offence, and took occasion to assert, that in *no age*, in *no country*, were men in power so free from this species of traffic. He, thereupon, called for *punishment* on the Tinman, who was fined and imprisoned, whose family was utterly ruined, and who soon after died with grief and misery. Well! 'But, 'was it not *right*,' you will say, 'to 'punish this attempt to bribe?' Yes: but now let us look at the conduct of this same Perceval, when he became a Minister, six years afterwards. The exposures of 1801 included *every species of bribery*; selling of offices: swapping of offices for seats; all sorts of trafficking in this way. But, at last, out came a distinct charge of Mr. MADDOCKS against this same *Perceval himself*, whom Mr. MADDOCKS accused of having, as Chancellor of the Exchequer,

who was also a Privy Councillor, *CON- NIVED at the sale of a seat in parliament, and at the causing the holder of the seat to quit it afterwards, because the holder would not vote for the acquittal of the Duke of York!* This was the distinct charge which Mr. MADDOCKS made against Perceval, and he pledged himself to prove it by witnesses at the bar of the House of Commons, if the House would hear those witnesses.

Now, then, what did your favourite Perceval, the unrelenting prosecutor of the poor Tinman, do? Why, he *did not deny* the charge, but, he begged of the House to get rid of Mr. MADDOCK'S motion, and *not to hear* his witnesses; and, *why?* Because, as he said, those who brought forward such charges *were enemies to the Constitution*, and were actuated by *seditions* motives. And, generations to come will hear with indignation, that the House determined by a large majority, that, *they would not hear the witnesses!* And Perceval continued to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, he continued to be a Privy Councillor, he was afterwards exalted to be Prime Minister, and, when he was killed by Mr. Bellingham, you, particularly in the diocese of Salisbury, sent up an address to the Regent, in which you *eulogized his character!*

Do you think, that these things can be forgotten? Do you think, that the calling the exposure of such things *seditions* will silence the voices or assuage the indignation of the virtuous part of mankind? Do you wish the people of England to be a *moral* and *religious* people, and yet do you wish that they should *not* hold these things in abhorrence? Do you wish them to be *honest* and *true*, and yet do you wish that they should approve of the foulest of frauds and the basest of perjuries? Do you wish them to believe in the Scriptures, and yet do you wish to regard those men as *seditions*, who reprobate bri-

bery and corruption and false-swearing agreeably to the principles of those very Scriptures?

SAMUEL, when about to yield up his Rulership over the Israelites, appeals, thus, to their justice as to his conduct in his great office:—“Behold, here I am: witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine enemies therewith? and I will restore it you.”—1. Samuel, xii chap. 3 verse. But, his sons, whom he had appointed to Rule after him, appear to have been of a different character.—“And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.”—1 Samuel, 8 chap. 3 verse. What was the consequence? Nothing short of a *revolution*; for the people, abhorring so much this act of taking *bribes*, called upon Samuel to leave them under the sway of a king; and, though Samuel told them, that a king would scourge them and plunder them; though, in short, they were assured, that they should be subjected to the most horrid *despotism*, yet, with their eyes open, and with the choice fairly before them, they preferred an open despotism however severe, to a base and cowardly, undermining and hypocritical system of *bribery*, by which they would have been as cruelly oppressed as by an undisguised despotism, and would, at the same time, have been deprived of the sympathy, which is always felt for those who suffer under the hand of an open and acknowledged despot. This is a remarkable instance of the horror, in which the crime of bribery was held in those times; and, indeed, it is a crime, which, in every part of the Scripture, where it is mentioned or alluded to, is, as far as I recollect, number-

ed amongst the most atrocious of offences. Gather not my soul with Sinners, nor my life with *bloody men*, in whose hands is mischief, and whose right-hand is full of *bribes*.”—Psalms, 26, v. 9 and 10. And, really, there can be little doubt, that he who will deliberately tender or take a *bribe*, being well aware of all the consequences, is capable of *any crime*. How many crimes has bribery actually created! ISAIAH charges the Israelites with being *corrupters*, and tells them, that their burnt offerings and sacrifices are a base and insolent mockery of God, while they are guilty of such things. “Learn to do well,” says he (chap. 1), and do not rely upon the formalities of your religion. JEREMIAH compares “*Corrupters*” to *brass* and *iron*; and, indeed, as we well know, they are the most impudent, the most profligate of all mankind. He calls them “*grievous revolters*” also (Chap. 6. v. 28); but, if he had lived in our day, he would have been called a *revolter*, that is to say, a *revolutionist*, himself! For this is the name given to us, who are labouring to put down *Corrupters* and *Bribers* by destroying the sources of corruption and bribery. Is it thus that we ought to be treated? From any of your Order ought we to expect such treatment? And, will any of you still persist in opposing the circulation of this work, the plain and obvious tendency of which is to drive from the land the abominations against which both Scripture and Reason cry aloud? Despitely as some of you have treated me; great and unjust as is the hatred which some of you have shown towards me; yet I will not apply even to these my most bitter enemies the description given by Amos (5 Chap. 10, 11, and 12 v.); but, if they persevere in their foul hostility, I shall leave the people to make the application. “They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they ab-

“hor him that *speaketh uprightly*.—Forasmuch, therefore, as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them.—For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.” If this serve to show, that there were bribery and corruption in times of old, it also serves to show, that there were men to reprobate such crimes, and to utter denunciations against those who committed them. The civil and political institutions of the Israelites were different from ours; but, the principles of morality and of justice have always been, and must always be, the same; and, without speaking profanely, what was Amos more or less than a Reformer, and a political Reformer too, of his day? He found the people in a state of oppression, he saw the poor trodden down, he saw them heavily burdened with taxes, he saw a large part of the produce of their labours taken from them, he saw those who took the taxes building splendid mansions and living in luxury, he saw the work of partiality and bribery going on, he saw the lower orders in society turned out of their rights, and he complained, that whoever rebuked any of the persons guilty of these things, whoever spoke uprightly, was *hated and abhorred* by those who had an interest in the continuance of the oppressions.

As to the crime of *false-swearing* it is notoriously one of the heaviest of those sins against which the wrath of God has been denounced; but, it becomes of much more than ordinary importance and much more than ordinary enormity, when it affects the well-being of a whole community. You know as well as I,

that, if any man gives a vote, either in the parliament or at an election, from *any motive of self-interest*, he is guilty of *false-swearing*. You know, that the Peers are strictly forbidden by law, and that it is a breach of their honour and their oaths as Peers, to exert *any sort of influence* in the returning of Members to the People's House, or Common's House, of Parliament. And, well knowing these things, how can you, as Clergymen bound by solemn vows to God to watch vigilantly over the morals, and earnestly to labour for the safety of the souls, of the people; how can you, possessing this knowledge, and bound by these obligations, hold your tongues as to the scenes, which, relative to these matters, are almost constantly before your eyes? And, do you think, that your silence will be justified by the plea, that the Reformers are *seditionous* men? Do you think, that, if asked why you have not endeavoured to put an end to the scenes exhibited at elections, it will be sufficient for you to say, that you feared *worse* might come? Do you suppose, that the bare plea of the apprehension of a *possible* evil will be a sufficient justification for a neglect to endeavour to put an end to a notoriously existing evil? If so, you must believe, that to suffer a poor creature to starve by the road side will be justified upon the plea of its being possible, that, if relieved, he might do harm in the world. This, however, you cannot believe. We are not to do evil that good may come of it; but we are not to refrain from doing good from the fear that evil may possibly be the ultimate consequence. The old Norman proverb: *Fait ce qu'il faut, arrive ce qu'il pourra*: Do what you ought to do, let the consequence be what it may. This is a rule of conduct worthy of men of honour and of true religion, and this is the maxim of our able and virtuous leader, MAJOR CARTWRIGHT, whose answer

to all the forebodings of the timid and the insincere, has always been: "Let us, "keeping the laws and constitution for "our guides, do all that we are able to "do, and *leave the rest to God.*" And, indeed, this is the language of common sense and is conformable to the common practice of mankind in all the concerns of life, public as well as private. Not to act upon this principle would be effectually to prevent every species of enterprise; nothing could ever be undertaken even for the preservation of the independence of a country. No improvement could ever be adopted; no difficulty could ever be overcome; nothing good could ever be undertaken, and, of course, could ever be accomplished.

"Where much is given, much is required;" and, though this applies to all men, in their several degrees, it applies more especially to you, whose very profession calls upon you to exert yourselves against detestable wickedness, and who receive such very large sums for your services. The annual income of the Church, arising from tythes and other sources, which are destined by the law for the purpose of insuring *teachers* of the people, is not less, I believe, than *five millions of pounds a year*, exclusive of the immense Church Property in Ireland. It is impossible to reconcile to reason, that this property ought to be suffered to be enjoyed by you but as a *reward for public duties*. It was originally so intended, as the endowments and the early laws clearly show. That it is not *private property in you* is certain, for you can neither give it away in your life times nor bequeath it at your deaths. If, then, it is to be looked upon as the compensation for services, how great ought those services to be! And, it will not be denied, I believe, that the poor as well as the rich, have a claim to a share in those services. Have not the *people*, then, the great mass

of the nation, a right to call on you to come forth to their assistance upon this occasion? If you post yourselves up as the Clergy only of the rich and powerful, on what do you ground your claim to any attention on the part of the people? Besides you ought to bear in mind, that the *tythes* were not granted to Clergymen and their *families*; that they were granted to a Clergy who *never had wives*; that the income of each living was to be divided into *four equal parts*, one part for the *poor*, one for the repairing of the Church and Church Yard and for the furnishing of the Sacramental Elements, &c. one part for keeping hospitality for travellers and pilgrims, and the remaining part *for the support of the Priest*. The poor are now maintained by the parish, the Churches, &c. are provided for by parish rates, you keep no hospitality for travellers, and you and your families consume the whole of the income! I know that modern laws allow of this; but, pray, then, do not object to the people's obtaining a *modern law* to insure to them their political rights.

Even if public duty were out of the question and if you could divest yourselves of all considerations of a religious nature, your *interest*, it seems to me, would naturally push you forward in the people's cause, which, if rightly viewed, is your own cause too. You can hardly believe, that things can proceed long without a great change of *some sort*, and nothing short of downright infatuation can induce you to hope that you can do any thing to prevent such change. And, I would ask you seriously, whether, under such circumstances, it is prudent, leaving justice out of the question, for you *to keep aloof from the people*? However, this will now be your *own affair*; and, if you resolve, after this remonstrance, to convince the people, that you will be the very last to afford them support, the people will with the less reluctance leave you to

your friends, the Agricultural Gentry and the Yeomanry Cavalry, who will probably dispose of your affair even before the question of Parliamentary Reform shall have been finally settled.

I now come to the *Second Part* of my subject, and I call upon you to deny, if you can, the cruelties of the House of Bourbon and the horrors of the Inquisition. And, why do I thus call upon you? Because it is notorious, that, in every stage, you were for war against the French people; and because, at the peace, there was a *Thanksgiving in the Church of England*, which last took place after the restoration of the Pope and the Bourbons.

As to the cruelties of the House of Bourbon previous to the Revolution in France, the bare enumeration of them would fill volumes. I shall, therefore, only assert here, that it is notorious, that they were the most cruel tyrants that Europe ever saw, and that this I am able to prove when any one of you shall dare deny the fact. But, as to the INQUISITION, I have something more particular to say, and, though I have said the same things upon a former occasion, this is a proper time to say them again. We are now feeling the weight of a war that cost more than a thousand millions; the miserable people of this country are now sinking under the consequences of that war. That war put down Napoleon; that war sent the brave and generous Napoleon into captivity; that war restored the Bourbons in France, Spain and Naples; it restored the Pope and the Inquisition, all which Bonaparte had put down. This is the price of our taxes, debts, and misery; and, let us see, then, how it agrees with the religious opinions you have taught, to rejoice at this restoration.

If there was one trait, above all others, by which your sermons and prayers, until of late years, were characterised, it was by your zealous, your violent, not to say

foul-mouthed, attacks on the Romish Pontiff, faith, and worship. You had no scruple to represent the Pope as *Anti-christ*, and as the *Scarlet Whore* of Babylon, covered with abominations. How clearly did you prove that he was the *Beast* of the Revelations; that he had made the world drunk with his fornications; that his seven heads were the seven hills on which Rome is situated; his ten horns the ten principle Catholic Sovereigns of Europe; and that his colour was scarlet, because it was dyed in the blood of the Saints? Was there scarcely a sermon, was there a prayer, that issued from your lips, in which you did not call on the Lord for vengeance on this "*Man of Sin*," and in which you did not describe the Catholic Religion as *idolatrous, blasphemous, diabolical*, and as evidently tending to the *eternal damnation of millions and millions of precious souls*?

Every one, who shall read what I am now writing, must acknowledge, that this description of your conduct, in regard to the Romish Church, is far short of the mark. What, then, have you now to say in justification of your recent conduct? Where is your justification for your violent attacks on Napoleon and his family, to say nothing, at present, of your thanksgivings for the restoration of the ancient order of things, or, in your own language, "*the ancient and venerable institutions*?" Where is your justification for your attacks on the Bonapartes? Others, indeed, might consistently attack them. Such as thought that the Church of Rome and her power were good things; or, such as regarded one religion as good as another, might consistently attack Bonaparte. But, you! you, who professed the opinions above described; how can you, apologize to the world, and to your flocks, for the part which you have taken against him?

The case, with regard to you, stands

thus: There was, before Bonaparte's power commenced, existing in Europe a system of religion, or, as you called it, irreligion, having at the head of it a Sovereign Pontiff, with innumerable Cardinals, Bishops, Vicars General, Abbots, Priors, Monks, Friars, Secular Priests, &c. &c. under him. To this body you ascribed false-doctrines, tricks, frauds and cruelties without end. You charged them with the propagation of idolatry and blasphemy; with keeping the people in ignorance; with nourishing superstition; with blowing the flames of persecution; with daily murdering, in the most horrid manner, the martyrs to the true faith. The Sovereign Pontiff himself, the corner stone of the whole body, you constantly called *Anti-Christ*, the *Scarlet Whore*, the *Beast*, and the *Man of Sin*. And you prayed most vehemently for his overthrow, insisting that the system, of which he was the foundation, manifestly tended to the eternal damnation of the souls of the far greater part of the people of Europe.

Well! Napoleon arose. He hurled down the Pope; he overthrew the *Anti-Christ*, the *Scarlet Whore*, the *Beast*, the *Man of Sin*, and with him all the long list of persecutors of the Saints. Napoleon and his associates did, in three years, what your prayers and preachings had not been able to effect in three centuries. The Pope was stripped of all temporal power; the Cardinals and Bishops were reduced to mere cyphers; the Monks were driven from their dens of laziness and debauchery; the tricks and frauds were exposed; the adored images were turned into fire wood; the holy relics were laughed at; the light of truth was suffered freely to beam upon the minds of the people; religious persecution was put an end to; and all men were not only *permitted*, but also *encouraged*, openly to profess, pursue and enjoy, whatever species of religious faith and worship they chose.

Every man became eligible to offices, trusts and honours; and, throughout the domains of Italy and France, where a Church of England man would have been tied to a stake and roasted rather than be suffered to fill an office of trust, or to preach to a congregation, religious liberty was, under Napoleon, made as perfect as in America.

These are facts, which none of you will dare openly to deny. They are as notorious as they will be, and ought to be, memorable.

Ought *you* not, therefore, to have rejoiced at this wonderful change in favour of religious liberty? How could you see 50 millions of souls set free without feeling it impossible to suppress an expression of your pleasure? How could you see the fall of *Anti-Christ* without putting up thanksgiving to that God, to whom you had so long been praying, whom you had so long been worrying with your importunities, for the accomplishment of that object? Was not this an event calculated to call forth your gratitude to Heaven?—Ought it not to have been expected from you, that you should speak very cautiously in disapprobation of Napoleon and the French Republicans, who had effected what you had so long been praying for apparently in vain? Ought you not, if you had spoken at all of the sins of his ambition; if you had blamed him as an invader, a conqueror, to have touched him with a tender hand, considering the immense benefits which religious liberty had received in consequence of his invasions and conquests? Ought he not to have found in *you*, above all men living, if not merciful judges, at least, mild and moderate censors?

If this was what might naturally and justly have been expected from you, what must have been the surprise and indignation of those who saw you amongst the very fiercest of Napoleon's foes; amongst

the foulest of his calumniators ; amongst the first and loudest of those who rejoiced at his fall ; who heard you hail with rapture the return of "the antient order of things," and the re-establishment of the "*venerable institutions*" of Europe ; who heard you joining in the Hosannas of the Monks, styling the Cossacks, and their associates "*Deliverers!*"

What was that "ancient order of things," the return of which you hailed with such rapture? What were those "*venerable institutions*," of which you thanked the Lord for the re-establishment? The *Holy See of Rome*, was one, and the *Inquisition* was another. Thousands of subaltern "*venerable institutions*" naturally followed in the train of these ; such as the Virgin Mary's House at Loretto ; the shrine of Saint Anthony ; the Holy Cross ; the exhibition of Saint Catherine's Wheel, of the Holy Thorn that penetrated Christ's cheek. Hundreds and thousands of thousands of these "*venerable*" things, naturally followed the overthrow of him who had overthrown them. All the persecutions of the Protestants ; all the frauds, insolence, and cruelty of the Romish Priests must have been in your view. You are not ignorant men. You knew to a moral certainty, that the Pope, whom you had formerly led your flocks to believe was Anti-Christ, would be restored. You knew that, instead of a milder sway, he would naturally be more rigid than ever in the exercise of his power. All this you knew. You knew, that the *toleration* of all Protestant sects, the encouragement of them, the free use of reason on religious subjects, and the free circulation of religious opinions, which were so complete under Napoleon, would be instantly destroyed in the far greater part of Europe.

The Holy Father, whom you formerly called the "*Scarlet Whore*," dyed in the

blood of the Saints. The "*Beast*" as you used to call him, whose "mouth was full of blasphemies," remounted his chair even before "the *Most Christian King*" got upon his throne. One of his first acts was to restore the *Jesuits*, that "*ancient and venerable institution*," which had become so odious, on account of its wicked acts, that it had been abolished by all the Princes of Europe, and even by a former Pope himself. The next remarkable step was, the re-establishment of the *Inquisition* in Spain, where it had been abolished by Napoleon on the day that he took possession of the Government of that country.

You yourselves well know what that tribunal was ; but, as some of the good people may not know the precise nature of that "*venerable institution*," which Napoleon abolished, and which has been restored in consequence of the successes of the war, I will here insert an account of it from the last edition of the *Encyclopædiæ Britannica*, under the words "*Inquisition*" and *Act of Faith*," as follows :—

"INQUISITION.—In the Church of Rome, a tribunal in several Roman Catholic countries, erected by the Popes for the examination and punishment of heretics.—This Court was founded in the 12th century, by Father Dominic and his followers, who were sent by Pope Innocent III. with orders to excite the Catholic princes and people to extirpate heretics, to search into their number and quality, and to transmit a faithful account thereof to Rome. Hence they were called *Inquisitors* ; and this gave birth to the formidable tribunal of the Inquisition, which was received in all Italy and the dominions of Spain, except the kingdom of Naples

“ and the Low Countries.—This diabolical tribunal takes cognizance of Heresy, Judaism, Mahometanism, Sodomy, and Polygamy; and the people stand in so much fear of it, that parents deliver up their children, husbands their wives, and masters their servants, to its officers, without daring in the least to murmur. The prisoners are kept for a long time, ’till they themselves turn their own accusers, and declare the cause of their imprisonment; for they are neither told their crime, nor confronted with witnesses. As soon as they are imprisoned their friends go into mourning, and speak of them as dead, not daring to solicit their pardon, lest they should be brought in as accomplices. When there is no shadow of proof against the pretended criminal, he is discharged, after suffering the most cruel tortures, a tedious and dreadful imprisonment, and the loss of the greatest part of his effects. The sentence against the prisoners is pronounced publicly, and with the greatest solemnity. In Portugal, they erect a theatre capable of holding 3000 persons; in which they place a rich altar, and raise seats on each side in the form of an amphitheatre. There the prisoners are placed; and over against them is a high chair, whither they are called, one by one, to hear their doom, from one of the Inquisitors. —These unhappy people know what they are to suffer by the clothes they wear that day. Those who appear in their own clothes are discharged, upon payment of a fine; those who have a *santo benito*, or strait yellow coat with-

“ out sleeves, charged with St. Andrew’s cross, have their lives, but forfeit all their effects; those who have the resemblance of flames made of red serge, sewed upon their *santo benito*, without any cross, are pardoned, but threatened to be burnt if ever they relapse; but those who, besides these flames, have on their *santo benito* their own picture, surrounded with figures of devils, are condemned to expire in the flames. The Inquisitors, who are ecclesiastics, do not pronounce the sentence of death; but form and read an act, in which they say, that the criminal being convicted of such a crime, by his own confession, is, with much reluctance, delivered to the secular power to be punished according to his demerits; and this writing they give to the seven Judges, who attend at the right side of the altar, who immediately pass sentence.”

“ ACT OF FAITH.—In the Romish Church, is a solemn day held by the Inquisition for the punishment of heretics, and the absolution of the innocent accused. They usually contrive the *Auto* to fall on some great festival, that the execution may pass with the more awe and regard; at least it is always on a Sunday.—The *Auto da Fe*, or *Act of Faith*, may be called the last act of the Inquisitorial tragedy; it is a kind of gaol-delivery, appointed as oft as a competent number of prisoners in the Inquisition are convicted of heresy, either by their own voluntary or extorted confession, or on the evidence of certain witnesses. The process is thus:—

" In the morning they are brought into a
 " great hall, where they have certain
 " habits put on, which they are to wear
 " in the procession. The procession is
 " led up by Dominican Friars; after
 " which come the penitents, some with
 " *san-benitos*, and some without, accord-
 " ing to the nature of the crimes: being
 " all in black coats without sleeves, and
 " bare footed, with a wax candle in their
 " hands. These are followed by the pe-
 " nitents who have narrowly escaped
 " being burnt, who over their black coats
 " have flames painted with their points
 " turned downwards, *Fuego revolto*.
 " Next come the negative and relapsed,
 " who are to be burnt, having flames on
 " their habits pointing upwards. After
 " these come such as profess doctrines
 " contrary to the faith of Rome, who,
 " besides flames pointing upwards, have
 " their picture painted on their breasts,
 " with dogs, serpents, and devils, all
 " open-mouthed about it. Each prisoner
 " is attended with a familiar of the Inqui-
 " sition; and those to be burnt have also
 " a Jesuit on each hand, who is continu-
 " ally preaching to them to abjure. After
 " the prisoners come a troop of familiars
 " on horseback, and after them the In-
 " quisitors, and other officers of the
 " Court, on mules; last of all, the Inqui-
 " sitor-General, on a white horse, led by
 " two men with black hats and green hat-
 " bands. A scaffold is erected in the
 " *Teniero de Pacs*, big enough for two or
 " three thousand people; at one end of
 " which are the prisoners, at the other
 " the Inquisitors. After a sermon made
 " up of encomiums of the Inquisition, and

" invectives against heretics, a priest as-
 " cends a desk near the middle of the
 " scaffold, and having taken the abjura-
 " tion of the penitents, recites the final
 " sentence of those who are to be put to
 " death; and delivers them to the secular
 " arm, earnestly beseeching at the same
 " time the secular power not to touch
 " their blood, or put their lives in danger.
 " The prisoners being thus in the hands
 " of the civil Magistrate, are presently
 " loaded with chains, and carried first to
 " the secular gaol, and from thence in
 " an hour or two brought before the civil
 " Judge; who, after asking in what reli-
 " gion they intend to die, pronounces
 " sentence on such as declare they die
 " in the communion of Rome, that they
 " shall be first strangled, and then burnt
 " to ashes; on such as die in any other
 " faith, that they be burnt alive. Both
 " are immediately carried to the Ribera,
 " the place of execution; where there are
 " as many stakes set-up as there are pri-
 " soners to be burnt, with a quantity of dry
 " furze about them. The stakes of the pro-
 " fessed, that is, such as persist in their
 " heresy, are about four yards high, hav-
 " ing a small board towards the top for
 " the prisoner to be seated on. The nega-
 " tive and relapsed being first strangled
 " and burnt, the professed mount their
 " stakes by a ladder; and the Jesuits,
 " after several repeated exhortations
 " to be reconciled to the church, part
 " with them, telling them they leave
 " them to the devil who is standing
 " at their elbow to receive their souls,
 " and carry them with him into the
 " flames of hell. On this a great shout

“ is raised, and the cry is, *let the dogs’*
 “ *beards be made*; which is done by
 “ thrusting flaming furzes fastened to
 “ long poles against their faces, ’till their
 “ faces are burnt to a coal, which is
 “ accompanied with the loudest acclama-
 “ tions of joy.—At last fire is set to the
 “ furze at the bottom of the stake, over
 “ which the professed are chained so high,
 “ that the top of the flame seldom reaches
 “ higher than the board they sit on; so
 “ that they rather seem roasted than
 “ burnt.—There cannot be a more la-
 “ mentable spectacle; the sufferers con-
 “ tinually cry out, while they are able,
 “ *Misericordia per amor de Dios.* ‘Pity
 “ for the love of God!’ yet it is beheld
 “ by all sexes and ages with transports of
 “ joy and satisfaction.”

Is there a man in the whole world, whose heart is not steeled against all the cries of nature, who can read this without feeling his blood run cold? Yet this horrible institution has been restored by that Bourbon, whom we, by our wars, and at our expence, reseated on the throne of Spain! Aye, and we are now taxed to pay the interest of the enormous Debt, contracted for this purpose! And yet, there are men so basely impudent as to assert, that our money was expended in obtaining the *freedom and happiness* of Europe!

GENTLEMEN, even laying the Clergyman aside, can you, when you dismiss all prejudice; when you coolly reflect on what has been done; when you consider, that we found the Pope dethroned, the Jesuits scattered, the Bourbons driven out, and the Inquisition put down, and

that *our success* has caused them all to be restored, and that the wars which produced that effect have reduced the people of England to such misery as to accept of *charity* at the hands of a *Bourbon Prince*; when you coolly——oh, no! not *coolly*, for coolness on such a subject is impossible. But, when you reflect on these things, and, at the same time remember what noble struggles our fathers maintained in the cause of religious liberty, are you not half maddened with shame and confusion? And do you, or can you, either believe or hope, that a state of things so unnatural, so monstrous, can possibly last? If you do, more words are useless; and, if you do not I have already said more than enough.

WM. COBBETT.

BRISTOL MEETING.

LONDON, DEC. 25.—Before this can come from the press a Meeting for *Parliamentary Reform* will have taken place at *Bristol*, at which Meeting I should certainly have attended, if it had been in my power, agreeably to an invitation on the part of the Gentlemen, by whom the Meeting was called for the 26th instant; but, it was impossible for me to leave London so soon, without neglecting my publication.—At BRISTOL a requisition, in very respectful language, was presented to the MAYOR, desiring *him* to call the Meeting; but, *not* following the good example of the Mayor of LYNN, the Mayor of Bristol refused. The people, however, were not thus to be defeated. They called the Meeting themselves on a hill called *Bran-*

don Hill, near Bristol. In consequence of this, *preparations* of a *defensive* sort appear to have been made. The following account of these is published in the *London COURIER* of this day. "That regular soldiers are assembling; that the North Somerset Yeomanry Cavalry are ready to march in to the aid of the Mayor; that a vestry in one parish has been held to collect persons to march to the Mayor's to be sworn in as special constables; that the parties signing a resolution at said vestry will not distribute any Christmas gifts on Thursday in order to keep the Watchmen to their duty on that day; and that they will dismiss from their employ all persons who do not work on the day of the Meeting!"—Never mind, Men of Bristol! All this is observed, all this is duly estimated, and all this will be long, aye, *very long remembered!*—How much trouble in the collecting of troops the Mayor would have saved himself, if he had called the Meeting, and had presided with impartiality! But, these men are blind. They never will, I fear, see, until it be too late.

LONDON PLOTS.

I intended to give an account here of the progress of this affair; but, the whole thing is now become so very contemptible, that it would be a shame to speak of it in a serious tone. Mr. PRESTON, by his honest and manly conduct, has blown the whole into air. In No. 24, I said it

would be thus; thus it has turned out, and the proprietors of the *Times* and the *Courier* will be deprived of the pleasure of seeing any body hanged *this time*.—Raven like, they are now croaking for blood-shed at Bristol. They will be disappointed again.—The 750 pounds have not yet brought YOUNG WATSON, but it appears to have brought the Lord Mayor a great many letters.—Of Mr. PLATT we hear no more; and, I am quite serious when I say, that we ought to hesitate before we implicitly believe that he was ever wounded at all; for, we have no other authority than the *Times*, the *Courier*, the *Post*, the *Sun*, &c. and, as to these four, we know that they positively asserted, upon authority, that Mr. HUNT and I were in the King's Bench, plotting with Lord COCHRANE, at the very time when I was at Peckham in Surrey, and Mr. HUNT at Wanstead in Essex. In short, they will say and swear any thing, in order to alarm or mislead the people as suits their purpose; and, they are quite capable of fabricating a wound as well as a plot. I do not know that there was not a man wounded; but I never will believe that there was, until I see the certificate of some respectable surgeon; or, until I have the fact upon better authority than that of these vile newspapers.

The next Register will contain a Letter to
OLD GEORGE ROSE.



